

532 the background is the sea. The white central transverse panel is the beach at
 776 Wulrungku.

The meaning of the designs on the lower panel are similar, the black central and branching lines representing the tracks made by the *Pitipituis* as they travel to and from their camps (the black discs); the encircling lines represent the sand around those camps, and the painted background, the jungle which shelters the little people.

3. THE PARAMANUAS⁴⁴

776 The *Paramanuas* are short, particularly active, agile men, about three feet high, with thick, powerful limbs, tusk-like teeth, and projecting toe and finger nails.

In general, except for these details, they resemble the aborigines in appearance, eat the same foods and follow a similar way of life.

[753] They live in many places throughout Melville and Bathurst Islands, but
 [124] no one except those captured by the *Paramanuas*, has seen either them or their homes. As they dislike being talked about, and often make those people ill who do so, I found it somewhat difficult to gather information about the *Paramanuas*.

[343] The homes of the *Paramanuas*, their wives and their children, are spacious underground caves, the entrances to which are openings either in the side of termite mounds, or hollow trees. In these caves, the men store their utensils, weapons and food (Fig. 14). Their cooking fire, like that of the aborigines, is always outside of their camp.

776 Occasionally a *Paramanua*, wishing to befriend an aboriginal, will watch
 787 him for some time. Then one day when the aboriginal is hunting by himself, the *Paramanua* will cast a spear at him. But, before the spear has reached its mark, the *Paramanua* will have caught it and, standing at the back of the aboriginal, will be tickling his ribs. The aboriginal, thoroughly scared, turns to strike his opponent, only to find him again at his back. This game goes on until the aboriginal is exhausted, dizzy and confused. Then hitting him on the side of the head with an open hand, rendering the aboriginal unconscious, the spirit man picks up the prostrate man and carries him to the underground home of the *Paramanuas*.

Awaking to find himself in a dark place, the aboriginal is terrified, but on receiving plenty of food from the *Paramanuas*, and treated with every kindness, the aboriginal loses all fear, and as the weeks go by, all sense of time.

⁴⁴ Harney and Elkin, 1942, p. 232, refer to these little people as *Barminuar*.

- 88) He was in the *kolloponiati* stage of initiation grade and was forbidden in the camp. One day in great secrecy he showed me some bark arm bracelets known as *tuguti*. A month later I was on a Malay lugger in the same region and some natives came out to the lugger in canoes. They told me that Cooper was to take the ceremony for his next degree that afternoon. I persuaded the master of the lugger to put me ashore on Papiau beach, opposite old Fort Dundas.
- [90] 123 The natives were unwilling to take me with them at first, but finally consented. We walked inland for about four miles and met the main group, all painted for the ceremony. Cooper was said to be out in the mangroves, but came in shortly after about midday. He then went out again for a sugar bag. Having learned a few words of the language I attempted* conversation. After a time I attempted to ask something about Cooper's *tuguti*. Immediately the cheerful group about me hushed and everyone seemed very concerned. They had gained the impression that I had stolen the *tuguti*. I tried to explain that I had only looked at them. About twenty of the men seated themselves in a circle and proceeded to discuss the problem. I overheard a few recognizable words at times, *ardjidit waitamanna*, no good white men, *palkoa*, dead, *yergobai*, alligator. I was sitting meanwhile with my back to a pandanus facing a salt water inlet. An emissary from the circle visited me from time to time and questioned me anxiously about what I had done with the *tuguti*. One humourist came over several times, tapped me on the shoulder, and grinningly pointed to the water, saying *yergobai*. Suddenly the discussion stopped, everybody stood up, and cordial relations were resumed as if nothing had happened.

881 Cooper returned about 4 p.m. He washed and was smeared all over with red ochre

● [343] except the upper part of the face. Mean-

- 88) while a small trestle had been built of three upright sticks about 2 ft. 6 in. high in the form of an isosceles triangle, with the apex to the west. Cross sticks were laid across the top of this and the sticks covered with grass. Three old men then took Cooper to a point about twenty yards east of the trestle and faced towards it, two on his right, one on his left. They each held a flat bladed club, *irruella*, in the left hand horizontally above the head and beat the point of it with a light round club with a pointed end, *merkunga*. Cooper held three *merkunga* in the crook of his left arm, one being taken and used by one of the old men. The old men advanced towards the trestle, chanting and beating their clubs in the way described. Cooper was slightly behind them. Young men followed the group. Cooper stood before the trestle as at an altar while the old men chanted for about five minutes. Water was called for, and brought by a woman and given to a visitor from the Mugula tribe. He then poured the water over Cooper's head. Cooper rubbed his belly with his *merkunga*. The visitor then pulled the hair string free from one end of the wooden collar, *eladini*, while Cooper made very wry faces. The collar was removed and the ceremony ended. I was presented with Cooper's *eladini* and *merkunga* in return for gifts, and I was cheerfully escorted back to the beach where the lugger was waiting for me.

H. K. FRY,
D.S.O., B.Sc., M.D.